

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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R 240750Z SEP 76 ZDK  
FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2112  
FBIS OKINAWA  
USLO PEKING  
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI  
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE  
AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 11188

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT CH

SUBJECT: CHIANG CHING: INDEPENDENT POLITICAL ACTOR?

1. SUMMARY: OVER THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS, WE HAVE NOTED SEVERAL POINTED REFERENCES TO CHIANG CHING (MADAME MAO) IN THE CHINESE MEDIA WHICH SEEMED DESIGNED TO EMPHASIZE HER ROLE AS AN INDEPENDENT POLITICAL ACTOR AS OPPOSED TO PORTRAYING HER IN A SPECIAL POSITION AS THE HONORED WIDOW OF THE LATE CHAIRMAN. HOWEVER, HER PAST OVERZEALOUS PURSUIT OF "LEFTIST" CAUSES MAY LIMIT HER INVOLVEMENT IN THE POST-MAO LEADERSHIP. END SUMMARY.

2. THROUGHT THE MOURNING AND FUNERAL SERVICES FOR THE LATE CHAIRMAN MAO TSE-TUNG, CHIANG CHING DID NOT TAKE A SPECIAL ROLE AS THE WIDOW OF THE CHAIRMAN BUT WAS CONSISTENTLY SHOWN IN HER RANK ORDER AS NO.5 AMONG THE ACTIVE MEMBERS OF THE TOP LEADERSHIP. THIS MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE RESULT OF OPPOSITION FROM OTHER MEMBERS OF THE POLITBURO NOT WISHING TO GIVE HER

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ADDED PROMINENCE OF STANDING NEXT TO THE BIER. FOR HER OWN

PART, CHAING CHING MAY HAVE FELT THAT IDENTIFICATION AS AN INDEPENDENT POLITICAL ACTOR, NOT DEPENDENT ON MAO'S PHYSICAL PRESENCE. WOULD GO FUTHER TO ENSURE HER LONG-TERM POLITICAL SURVIVAL.

3. ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL POINTED REFERENCES TO CHINAG CHING IN THE MEDIA IN THE PAST FEW DAYS WHICH SEEM TO ACCENTUATE HER PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CHAIRMAN AS WELL AS HER POLITICAL ROLE. ON SEPTEMBER 18, KIANGSI FIRST SECRETARY CHAING WEI-CHING IN A SPEECH AT A MA MEMORIAL MEETING MENTIONED CHIANG, EXPRESSING "OUR CHIANG CHING". WE ALSO NOTE A SEPTMBER 22 NCNA ENGLISH STORY FROM SINKIANG WHICH REVEALED THAT DURING THE FORUTH NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS (JANUARY 1975) SHE CONVEYED MAO'S "KING ATTENTION AND EXPECTATIONS" FOR THE PEOPLE OF ARIOUS NATIONALITIES.

4. NEVERTHELESS CHINAG CHING'S OVERZEALOUS PURSUIT OF POLITICAL PURITY HAS NOT ENDEARED HER TO MANY ELEMENTS ACROSS THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM, IF LAST YEAR'S PERSISTENT RUMORS ABOUT HER POLITICAL PROBLEMS ARE ANY GUIDE. IN FACT, WANG HUNG-WEN, CHANG CHUN-CHIAO, AND YAO WEN-YUAN, WHO HAVE AT VARIOUS TIMES BEEN ASSOCITAED WITH HER--MAY NOW VIEW HER ZEALOTRY AS A LIABILITY, LIMITING THEIR ABILITY TO PROJECT A REASONABLE POLITICAL IMAGE. THUS, DESPITE THE PHYSICAL INCLUSION WITHIN THE POLITBURO LEADERSHIP TURNOUTS FOR THE FUNERAL, THERE MAY BE A WIDESPREAD WILLINGNESS TO LIMIT HER INVOLVEMENT IN THE POST-MAO LEADERSHIP.

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